

AMENDED CLAIM SET

The claims have been amended as set forth in the following listing of the claims:

Claims 1-19. (canceled)

20. (currently amended) A high temperature treating method for inflators for an air bag, said inflators having metal housing shells with wiring harnesses attached thereto for activation and combustible gas generating material therein, comprising:

cutting and removing said wiring harnesses from the inflators;

grouping said inflators according to metals constituting said housing shells;

charging the respective groups of inflators which have been subjected to treatment in the preceding steps into thermal treating towers to subject said inflators to thermal treatment at a temperature at which said gas generating materials inside the inflators burn without melting those metals constituting said housing shells; and

maintaining the temperature at least for about 3 times or more of a time required to thermally treat the inflators; and

recovering inflators to be thermally treated by cutting said wiring harnesses from the inflators at a root portion of the wiring harnesses,

wherein said charging step includes the step of carrying out the thermal treatment at a temperature not lower than 550°C and not higher than 700°C, such that a grouped metal constituting said housing shells does not melt.

21. (previously presented) A method for recovering those metals constituting the housing shells of inflators after completing the high temperature treating method according to claim 20, comprising:

subsequently cooling the interior of the thermal treating tower, thereafter removing said inflators from said tower, and thereafter melting the inflators.

22. (new) A method for recovering those metals constituting the housing shells of inflators after completing the high temperature treating method according to claim 20, wherein the maintaining step includes the step of maintaining the temperature at least for about 3 to 30 times of the time required to thermally treat the inflators.

23. (new) A method for recovering those metals constituting the housing shells of inflators after completing the high temperature treating method according to claim 20, wherein the maintaining step includes the step of maintaining the temperature for no longer than about 100 times of the time required to thermally treat the inflators.